**READER’S THEATER**

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| **Busy Bees: Life in a Honeybee Hive  By Sheri Skelton** |  | http://www.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/edhelp1.gif |

Cast of Characters  
  
*Queen Anne  
Egg  
Larva  
Pupa  
Worker Bees  
Hilda  
Hannah  
Helen  
Florence  
Francis  
Susie  
Drones  
David  
Donald*

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| **Queen Anne:** |  | This is my hive. About ten days after I hatched, I made a flight to mate with several drones flying about in the air. I then returned to the hive, where I have been laying eggs ever since, as many as 2,000 per day. |

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| **Egg:** |  | After the queen lays me, I rest by myself in one cell of the honeycomb. I have a soft shell, pearly white in color and shaped like a sausage. After three days I turn into a larva. |

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| **Larva:** |  | I am white with no legs and no eyes. All I do is eat and eat and eat for six days. Then my cell is capped with wax, and I become a pupa. |

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| **Pupa:** |  | I simply lie silently in my cell, eat nothing, and wait to emerge as a bee. What kind of bee I become depends upon the number of days I remain a pupa and what I have been fed as a larva. |

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| **Queen Anne:** |  | As a larva, I was stuffed with sweet royal jelly to increase my size. After spending twelve days as a pupa, I emerged as a queen. |

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| **Worker Bees:** |  | As larvae, we were fed beebread, a mixture of pollen and nectar. From the pupa stage we emerged as worker bees, the female bees who keep the colony running smoothly and efficiently. |

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| **Hilda, Hannah, and Helen:** |  | We are house bees, who live our lives inside the hive. |

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| **Hilda:** |  | I feed the beebread to the larvae and royal jelly to the queen and the drones. |

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| **Hannah:** |  | I produce wax to build new cells for the comb, clean the hive, and cool it by fanning my wings. |

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| **Helen:** |  | I remove excess water from the nectar that the foragers deposit in the honeycomb cells. Then I place a wax cap over each cell to store the honey for our winter food supply. |

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| **Florence, Francis, and Susie:** |  | We are forager bees, who spend time outside the hive searching for food and guarding the hive. |

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| **Florence:** |  | I buzz from flower to flower, collecting pollen to bring to the hive. |

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| **Francis:** |  | With my long, straw-like tongue, I suck nectar from flowers and bring it back to the hive for making honey. |

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| **Susie:** |  | I fly solo to scout out new food sources. When I discover a good source, I return for the other foragers, and together we dance to celebrate our good fortune. |

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| **Drones:** |  | As larvae, we emerged three days after the female worker bees. We are the male bees of the hive and have large eyes and no stingers. |

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| **David:** |  | I am fed and cared for by the house bees in the hive. You might say I am a couch potato with no real job to perform within the hive. |

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| **Donald:** |  | Occasionally I fly out of the hive to test my wings and look for a queen to mate with. If I do not find a queen, eventually I will be thrown out of the hive. |

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| **Drones:** |  | Once we mate with a queen, we usually die. If we don't die, we will be cast out of the hive in the fall and left to fend for ourselves. |

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| **Queen Anne:** |  | I rule my colony for several years. If I die before then, my colony will also perish. I use my stinger to kill any new queen bees, who may threaten me, but when I grow old, I will be replaced. |

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| **Worker Bees:** |  | If our colony becomes too crowded, some of us will split and build a new hive. We fill ourselves with honey for our journey, which is called swarming. If honey-eating bears or ants invade, everyone in our colony may swarm. |

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| **All the Bees:** |  | Bees are important. Not only do we produce honey that humans like, we also help plants with pollination, so their life cycles can continue. Without us, many plants might become extinct. |